

recommendations now rather than waiting for the federal government to adopt them in the form of regulations over the next three to five years. The recommendations include an increase in fruits and vegetables, substituting whole grains for half grains, requiring low or no fat milk and trans fat-free products, limiting sodium, and establishing a maximum calorie target. Next, she reviewed a national school food report card chart for 2007 which graded North Carolina a “D.” Her suggestions for improving the State’s report card focused on improved wellness policies, nutritional standards for foods available in schools and school fundraisers, mandatory menu labeling in restaurants, stronger marketing policies to limit junk-food advertising in school settings, and increases in soft drink taxes to generate revenues to fund programs addressing childhood obesity.

- Hank Cardello, Chair of the Global Obesity Business Forum at UNC-Chapel Hill, reviewed the work of the Task Force on Childhood Obesity and its examination of how the competing interests of the food and beverage industry, health advocates, and consumers is derailing the effort to solve the problem of obesity. He discussed the difficulty in changing consumer behavior and reviewed some industry initiatives to change consumer behavior and improve healthful eating, such as: portion-controlled packaging, special restaurant products for children’s meals, reduced-sugar cereal initiatives, modifications to school vending machine programs, and limited advertising to children under age 12. Mr. Cardello also presented several public sector initiatives regarding healthy schools, increased physical activity, better availability of healthy foods in low-income areas, and legislation to mandate menu labeling, ban trans fats, and impose a soda tax. He emphasized that the overall focus must be on getting the industry, health advocates, and consumers to become invested in reducing calories.
- Roberta Friedman, Director of Public Policy for the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity, Yale University, presented the Task Force with research done by the Center and others to make healthy eating and good nutrition the default, easy choice for school-aged children by implementing the following 5 policy recommendations: (1) Ban all advertising on school campuses; (2) ban all food and beverage ads; (3) ban ads for products not allowed for sale on campus; (4) ban sales of non-nutritional products; and (5) require exclusive contracts to disallow sales and ads. Ms. Friedman expressed the Center’s support of a tax on all beverages with sugar based sweeteners, and not just soft drinks, in order to reduce consumption and generate tax revenues for obesity prevention. She also noted that the Center agrees with other research suggesting that schools are not healthy environments, and recommended that North Carolina pursue menu labeling to make caloric information available at drive thru lanes and other nutrition information available on restaurant premises, along with an anchor statement about the recommended daily caloric intake for an average adult.

April 19, 2010

- Lee Dixon, Task Force staff, reviewed the draft copy of the report. The Task Force discussed the proposed findings and recommendations. The Task Force moved to adopt, as amended, the Final Report to the 2010 General Assembly.